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Scholars-Mahathir

MAHATHIR TELLS ULAMAS TO SEEK SOLUTIONS TO MUSLIM PROBLEMS

PUTRAJAYA, July 9 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Muslims themselves must search for solutions to the current problems to avoid them and their countries from being victimised at will.

"Muslims everywhere are certainly aware of the current threats posed against them," said the Prime Minister in his foreword in the souvenir programme of the World Conference of Islamic Scholars beginning here tomorrow.

He said that Muslims were also aware of their weaknesses and the inability of Muslim nations to defend themselves either by way diplomacy or militarily.

Dr Mahathir questioned why such a situation had occurred whereas the Islamic empire was once regarded as a power to be reckoned with.

"There was only one Islam brought by the Prophet Muhammad. However, there are now hundreds of so-called Islamic teachings as claimed by the followers," he said.

The Prime Minister said that often the teachings were not only contradictory but sometimes the followers accused one another of being unIslamic.

While welcoming local and foreign participants of the conference, he hoped that the meeting would reduce confusion among Muslims and rectify their weaknesses.

"Since this is the first-ever gathering of Muslim scholars and thinkers, it is crucial that they tackle a host of problems arising from misinterpretation of Islam and other causes, such as the advent of modernity or ideological influences," he said.

About 900 foreign and local participants are expected to attend the three-day gathering to discuss challenges globalisation faced by Islam.

In his separate foreword, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the conference was vital in the context of current development affecting Muslims and their countries.

"Thus, ulamas have an important role in purifying the minds of Muslims and at the same time educate non-Muslims that Islam rejects extremism," he said.

Abdullah called on ulamas to work together towards expounding positive views to overcome problems of Muslims by taking into consideration the current development and needs.

He expressed hope that the meeting would be a launching pad for the pooling of ideas and creating synergies between ulamas, politicians and administrators in an effort to achieve excellence for Muslims.

-- Bernama

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